

REMARKS

The Advisory Action dated February 2, 2006 has been received and carefully considered. In this response, claims 1, 13, 21 and 36 have been amended. Claims 2 and 29 have been cancelled without prejudice. Entry of the amendments to the claims, and the cancellation of claims 2 and 29 without prejudice are respectfully requested. Reconsideration of the outstanding rejections in the present application is also respectfully requested based on the following remarks.

I. THE INTERVIEW

At the outset, the undersigned thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended during the interview conducted on February 17, 2006.

Discussion at the interview focused on claim 1. The Examiner understood the distinctions between Applicants' invention and the cited references and suggested amendments to claim 1. Following the Examiner's suggestion, Applicants have amended the claims, the details of which are discussed in the following section.

II. CLAIM AMENDMENTS

For formalities, the phrase "a redirected customer web site access request" in claim 1 has been changed to "a redirected

customer request for access to a web site." This change does not change the substantive meaning of the phrase. It is meant to fix the antecedent basis problem noted in page 2 of the October 28, 2006 Final Office Action. Similar changes are made to claims 13, 21 and 36.

As suggested by the Examiner, claim 1 has been amended to recite "wherein the notification unit comprises a scheduling processor for scheduling access of the customer to the web site," which is a limitation recited in the originally filed claim 2. Incorporation of this limitation into claim 1 is not meant to limit the scope of claim 1. Rather, it is only meant to clarify that the notification unit does not merely return an error message when the web site has insufficient capacity. Claim 2 is now cancelled without prejudice.

As suggested by the Examiner, Applicants have removed from claim 1 the limitation "wherein the internet customer access system is independent from the web site," and replaced it with "whereupon the customer then communicates directly with the web site without further intervention by the internet customer access system." Applicants agree with the Examiner that this whereupon clause more accurately describes the circumstances of redirecting the customer to the web site if the web site has sufficient capacity. It should be noted, however, that the

phrase "without further intervention" does not mean that the customer can always initiate new connections with the web site without being redirected to the internet customer access system first. As a skilled artisan would understand, in the context of the claimed invention, the "without further intervention" limitation refers to a current connection between the customer and the web site. If the customer ends the current connection and later attempts to access the web site again, the new access request may still be redirected to the internet customer access system in accordance with embodiments of the claimed invention.

It is believed that the above-described amendments place claim 1 and its dependent claims 3-12 in condition for allowance.

Following the same or similar rationale, Applicants have made amendments to independent claims 13, 21 and 36.

In claim 13, Applicants have removed the limitation "wherein the internet customer access system is independent from the web site." A "redirect unit" with the same limitations as recited in claim 1 has been added to claim 13. In addition, a limitation "wherein the redirect unit redirects the customer to the web site based on the scheduled access if the web site has sufficient capacity" has been included for the "customer identification unit." It is believed that, if claim 1 is

allowable, claim 13 and its dependent claims should be allowable for at least the same reasons.

In claim 21, the limitation "whereupon the customer then communicates directly with the web site without further intervention by the internet customer access system" is added. Furthermore, the method in claim 21 now includes a step of "scheduling customer access" in addition to the step of "notifying the customer" if the web site has insufficient capacity. Similar to claim 1, the inclusion of the scheduling step is only meant to clarify that the notifying step does not merely return an error message when the web site has insufficient capacity. Claim 29, which recited the notifying step, is now cancelled without prejudice.

In claim 36, a step of "redirecting the customer" is added with the same whereupon clause as found in claim 1. In addition, claim 36 now recites in the "determining" step the limitation "wherein, if the customer has the previously scheduled access, the customer is redirected to the web site according to the previously scheduled access if the web site has sufficient capacity."

It is believed that claims 21 and 36, as well as their dependent claims, are allowable for at least the same reasons applicable to claim 1.

III. CONCLUSION


In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and an early indication of the same is courteously solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone at the below listed telephone number, in order to expedite resolution of any issues and to expedite passage of the present application to issue, if any comments, questions, or suggestions arise in connection with the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR § 1.136 is hereby made.

Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-0206, and please credit any excess fees to the same deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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